

## **SIGN-UPS FOR 2009 USDA'S EMERGENCY WATERSHED PROTECTION – FLOODPLAIN EASEMENT PROGRAM**

Jackson, Miss., March 11, 2009, — The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will provide up to \$145 million to eligible landowners nationwide through the floodplain easement component of its Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) Program. The funds will be used to restore an estimated 60,000 acres of frequently flooded land to its natural state and create jobs.

USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) will take applications to purchase easements on eligible floodplains through March 27, 2009 at their local USDA Service Center.

NRCS may purchase easements on any floodplain lands that have been impaired within the last 12 months or that have a history of repeated flooding (i.e., flooded at least two times during the past 10 years). Purchases are based upon established priorities.

The funding, obtained from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, includes both technical and financial assistance to restore the easements to their natural conditions. All funds will be spent on targeted projects that can be completed with economic stimulus monies. The goal is to have all floodplain easements acquired and restored within 12 – 18 months.

Interested landowners can contact their local USDA Service Center for more information about the EWPP-FPE during the signup. For information about EWPP-FPE, please visit one of the following web sites: <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/ewp/Floodplain/index.html> or <http://www.ms.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/>.

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